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DART Team Prepares for Anthrax Casualties

MAMC PAO

On May 8, 1999, 16 soldiers from Charlie Company of the 296th Forward Support Battalion were on a three day field training exercise on Fort Lewis, in the wooded area across from the PX and commissary. While on patrol, the soldiers noticed a low flying aircraft spraying an ultra-light, fine white powdery substance as it flew directly overhead. Two days later, the soldiers were seen at sick call on North Fort Lewis

for ailments such as seizures, respiratory distress, severe sore throat, chest discomfort, malaise, and headache.



Luckily, this was just an exercise designed to assess Madigan Army Medical Center's Disas-

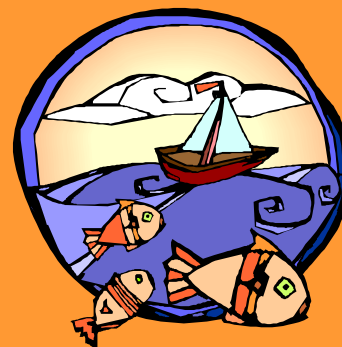
ter Assistance Response Team's (DART) capability to respond to chemical and biological disasters.

The exercise was conducted as part of an effort to train and prepare for a mass casualty situations involving weapons of mass destruction. The DART, in conjunction with Nuclear Bio-

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Naval Hospital Bremerton Construction on New Wing

Judith Robertson - NHB PAO

Construction on a three-story 55-thousand square foot wing to be built on the front of Naval Hospital Bremerton will begin officially August 20 at 11 a.m.

when shovels slice in to the sloping hillside adjacent to the hospital's quarterdeck. The construction contract, that also includes a three-level, 250-car parking

garage and renovation to the existing hospital structure, was awarded July 2 as a joint venture project to Harper Construction Co. from San Diego, Calif. and the

Portland, Oregon firm, Nielson Dillingham Builders, for close to \$24 million. The architectural firm, NBBJ Co., of Seattle did the design

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DART Team Prepares for Anthrax Casualties, contd.

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Team (NBC-SMART), Preventive Medicine, Fort Lewis military police and fire department, MAMC and Shannon ambulances, local fire and Hazardous Material teams in Pierce county participated in three-hour Anthrax Casualty Exercise May 10.

The training was conducted on North Fort Lewis, and was designed to familiarize those involved with the process of diagnosis, decontamination, triage, and evacuation of anthrax-exposed individuals.

"This was the first such exercise at Fort Lewis, and to our knowledge, the first of its kind on any US Army facility," said MAJ David Siegel, Officer

in Charge, DART Team.

Siegel said that training exercises such as this one are necessary in order to identify any areas of weakness in the overall preparation and execution during a real emergency situation.

"There were many lessons learned; however, it is only through trial and error that these shortcomings are identified," Siegel said.

Overall, Siegel said he was very pleased with the outcome of the exercise.

Tracy becomes New Naval Hospital Oak Harbor CO

LT Theresa Harris

Naval Hospital, Oak Harbor held a retirement ceremony and a change of command ceremony in front of the hospital on July 9, 1999.

CAPT John E. Tracy relieved CAPT Michael W. Benway as Commanding Officer of the Naval Hospital. CAPT Benway has commanded the Hospital for the past three years.

Under CAPT Benway's leadership, the Hospital underwent a Joint Commission Accreditation of Hospital Organizations inspection in which the hospital received a score of 97%, in 1997. During this year, there was also the development of the Prime Health Center (PHC). The PHC was a reorganization of five clinics into three multi-disciplinary teams.

In 1998, the Inspector General and the Regional Line Commander inspected the Hospital. The Command was most pleased with having no "tabs" issued during the inspection.

CAPT Benway completed 29 years of active duty service. His personal awards include the Meritorious Service Medal with Gold Star, the Navy

Achievement Medal with Gold Star, and various service awards.

Captain Benway will be residing on Whidbey Island in a new home with lots of sweat equity! His care and concern for all individuals from the deck plate up will be missed. The Hospital wishes him, and his wife Barbara fair winds and following seas. To quote him, "Be safe, sane, and sober!"

Captain Tracy is a native of the Pacific Northwest; he is married to former Patricia Marie Hines of Springfield, Pennsylvania. They have five children and one granddaughter.

Tracy completed his graduate studies at Washington State University in 1977. In June 1977, he received a direct commission in the United States Navy's Medical Service Corps.

After completing Officer Indoctrination School in Bethesda, Maryland, he reported to Naval Regional Medical Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he served as the Department Head for Preventive Medicine and Industrial Hygiene.

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Naval Hospital Bremerton Construction on New Wing Contd.

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for the new wing.

According to Lt. Robert Butters, head, Facilities Management Dept., the work will proceed in three phases. First the demolition of the existing Quarter Deck, then the construction of the new wing and parking garage and finally the renovation of portions of the existing hospital.

"The project will house func-

tions that serve the out patient population, including the pharmacy, out patient records and Family Practice Clinics," Butters said.

Completion of the wing, estimated for Sept. 2002, will eliminate the portable trailers that have been



home to part of the Family Practice Clinic since 1995 and will provide needed breathing space for the hospital. The current structure was designed in the 1970s and opened it's doors to a much larger than expected population of beneficiaries in 1980.

Naval Hospital Exterminates Y2K "bug"

Judith Robertson – NHB PAO



-- A year and a half ago, the Naval Hospital planned a preemptive strike on the Y2K "bug,"

and this early preventive stance has the facility "facing the next millennium with confidence," according to Lt. Kevin Darnell, the hospital's Chief Information Officer.

"Eighteen months ago we put together a dynamic multi-disciplinary team to look at the systems and processes that might be affected by this bug," said Darnell, team leader. "We took a 'preventive medicine' for systems approach."

"All areas of the hospital's sys-

tems and processes have been scrutinized to determine if they were susceptible to being affected by this problem," Darnell said. "Many of the hospital's non-Y2K compliant components have either been replaced, upgraded or retired. The team is also pursuing contingency business plans and test plans."

Contingency planning is nothing new for the hospital, according to Cmdr. Rick Becker, director for administration. "We have planned for possible problems resulting from the Y2K bug in the same way we have prepared for the possibility of any contingency that has the potential for disrupting operating systems, such as power outages or earthquakes," Becker said.

"Services will continue," said

Director Cmdr. Duncan Barlow, a radiologist. "That's the bottom line," he said. "The majority of equipment used regularly in radiology and in the lab are not date or time sensitive. In a 'worst case' scenario we would simply revert to the stubby pencil system of hand written log books, lab chits and prescriptions."

"Our biggest concern is not an issue resulting from Y2K," said Lt. Josh Miller, pharmacist and assistant department head at the Naval Hospital Pharmacy, "it's that people may feel the need to hoard medications. That could actually cause a bigger strain on the system, much worse than anything a Y2K bug could do to us."



McChord's 62nd Medical Group Gets New Commander

COL Raymond Johns, 62nd Air Wing Commander, passes the 62nd Medical Group Guidon to COL Suzanne R. Hansen, New Commander, 62nd Medical Group, MSG Jordan Haines is in the middle



A Change of Command Ceremony was conducted July 8 at 10 a.m. for the McChord Air Force Base 62nd Medical Group. COL Thomas A. Vann, relinquished command to COL Suzanne R. Hansen, after serving as commander since 1998. Immediately following the change of command, a retirement ceremony was conducted for COL Vann, who served in the United States Air Force for 28 years. COL Vann and his family will be residing in Columbus, Ohio.

COL Hansen is a native of southern California. Prior to her present assignment, she served as Chief, Utilization Management and Discharge Planning, as well as Senior Nurse Executive at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. COL Hansen said that she is looking forward to the challenges of group command at McChord AFB.

Tracy becomes New Naval Hospital Oak Harbor CO, contd.

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From July 1980 to August 1984, he was assigned to Naval Regional Medical Center, Oakland, California, as the Training Officer for the Navy's Preventive Medicine Technician School.

In August 1984, he transferred to Naval Regional Medical Center, Bremerton, Washington, where he served as the Department Head for Preventive Medicine. He was later assigned as the Director for Occupational Health and Preventive Medicine Services throughout a tri-state region.

From January 1990 to April 1993, he served as the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard Branch Medical Clinic Director followed by an assignment as Director for Administration at Naval Medical Clinic, Pearl Harbor, Ha-

waii.

In April 1993, he was assigned to Naval Hospital, Great Lakes, Illinois, as the Director for Administration. From June 1996 to June 1999, he served as the Executive Officer of United States Naval Hospital, Yokosuka, Japan.

Captain Tracy's personal awards include the Meritorious Service Medal with Gold Star, Navy Commendation Medal with Gold Star, Navy Achievement Medal, and various service awards.

Naval Hospital, Oak Harbor extends a warm welcome to Captain Tracy and his family.